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~~Rev.~~ Russell, Richard

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Sen. Russell Takes His Stand

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee's vote to seek a role in overseeing U. S. intelligence agencies has triggered the expected reaction from Sen. Richard B. Russell (D-Ga.). He's agin' it.

It was thought that Mr. Russell, who heads the subcommittee now serving as "watchdog" for the public's interests in relation to the Central Agency and like federal units, might convey his opposition by private means, to avoid a public controversy over secret matters. There was some reason to think a quiet compromise could have been arranged.

Instead he has made it clear he's in no mood for half-measures. The estimable Georgian has taken issue publicly with those who fear the CIA makes foreign policy, sees "no justification for any other committee to muscle in" on jurisdiction over the agen-

cy, and stands prepared to defend it to the extent necessary.

Senator Russell is a man who always commands respect, but in this case perhaps he can't see the forest for the trees.

Even if the fears of many that the CIA has wandered far afield from its assigned responsibilities are groundless, it is important to provide reassurance, and if it takes some enlarging of the "watchdog" committee to do that, well and good.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee decided not to ask that a new group be formed complete with staff to replace the present subcommittee. All it wants is representation on the latter group. That's little enough to ask, considering that more than a few private citizens, in addition to many Congressmen, have had moments of anxiety about how the giant supersecret CIA goes about its business.